

Message Text

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ACTION SCCT-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 2350

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC VE

SUBJ: NIEHOUS KIDNAPPEING - NEWSPAPER ARTICLE ON KIDNAPPERS'
MESSAGE

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. EL NACIONAL OF FEB 29, IN ADDITION TO FRONT PAGE HEADLINE, CARRIED ALMOST FULL PAGE ARTICLE DESCRIBING HOW KIDNAPPERS' MESSAGE TO EL NACIONAL WAS DELIVERED. ARTICLE ALSO QUOTES EXCERPTS FROM MESSAGE AND MENTIONS OTHER DOCUMENTS ATTACHED.

2. AFTER DESCRIBING HOW ENVELOPE (POSTMARKED FEB 25 AND WITH PROPER AMOUNT OF POSTAGE) WAS DEPOSITED IN A BRANCH POST OFFICE AND NEWSPAPER SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMED BY TELEPHONE OF LETTER'S LOCATION, ARTICLE MAKES FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON CONTENTS OF ENVELOPE: "THE ENVELOPE, IN ADDITION TO THE DOUCMENT IN WHICH THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMANDOS TAKE CREDIT FOR THE KIDNAPPING OF NIEHOUS, CONTAINED 22 PHOTOCOPIES OF LETTERS, MEMORANDA, TELEXES, AND REFERENCE NOTES, SOME WITH THE OWENS-ILLINIOS OF VENEZUELA C.A. LETTER HEAD. SUBJECT OF THESE DOCUMENTS WAS DESCRIBED IN KIDNAPPERS' LETTER AS CONSITUTING IRREFUTABLE PROOF OF THE INTERFERENCE
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OF COMPANY IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE COUNTRY, SPECIFICALLY

IN THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ORDER.

3. THE KIDNAPPERS' LETTER, ACCORDING TO THE NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, CONTAINED A SERIES OF POLITICAL REASONS FOR THE KIDNAPPING CARRIED OUT IN THE NAME OF ARGIMIRO GABALDO, GUERRILLA COMMANDER OF THE "SIMON BOLIVAR" DETACHMENT, WHO DIED SOME YEARS AGO IN LARA STATE. BY MEANS OF THE ARGIMIRO GABALDON OPERATION, THE KIDNAPPERS' LETTER STATED, "WE ARE INFORMING THE PUBLIC THAT THE CITIZEN WILLIAM NIEHOUS IS BEING INTERROGATED AS PART OF THE TRIAL TO WHICH HEAS HAS BEEN SUBMITTED." THE KIDNAPPING WAS DESCRIBED

IN THE LETTER AS "A CAPTURE AND IMPRISONMENT." ANOTHER POLITICAL REASON GIVEN IN THE MESSAGE WAS "THE EXECUTION OF A VAST REPRESSIVE PLAN BEING CARRIED OUT AGAINST THE POPULAR MASSES, ALONGSIDE THE DAILY ECONOMIC REPRESSION EXPRESSED IN THE HIGH COST OF LIVING." SPECIFICALLY, THE "INTENSE REPRESSION" CARRIED OUT AGAINST STUDENTS WAS CITED. THE KIDNAPPERS' LETTER ALSO WARNS THE POLICE AUTHORITIES THAT WHATEVER REPRISALS ARE CARRIED OUT WILL LEAD TO THE EXECUTION OF NIEHOUS AND DECLARES THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR AVOIDING THIS ACT IS ENTIRELY IN THE HANDS OF THE GOVERNMENT.

4. FURTHER QUOTING THE KIDNAPPERS' LETTER, THE NEWSPAPER ARTICLE SATATED THAT "TODAY, GROUPS OF REVOLUTIONARY COMMANDOS PROCEEDED TO CAPTURE THE GENERAL MANAGER AND WORLD VICE PRESIDENT OF OWENS-ILLINOIS, MR. WILLIAM NIEHOUS, NORTH AMERICAN CITIZEN, 43 YEARS OLD, NATIVE OF TOLEDO, OHIO. THE CAPTURE AND SUBSEQUENT IMPRISONMENT OF THE CITED INDIVIDUAL IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FACT THAT THE MENTIONED FIRM INTERFERED IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE COUNTRY, SPECIFICALLY IN THE PUBLIC AND ECONOMIC ORDER. DOCUMENTS THAT OUR INTELLIGENCE SERVICE WAS ABLE TO OBTAIN CONTAIN EVIDENCE THAT PROVES THIS INTERVENTION."

5. UNDER THE HEADING "POLITICAL INTERFERENCE", THE FIRST DOCUMENT CITED WAS CALLED "MAVIPLANCA (AN OWENS-ILLINOIS SUBSIDIARY), PART 1, SUMMARY, BUSINESS CLIMATE," REPORTED TO BE CRITICAL OF (A) BANK LAW, (B) FOREIGN INVESTMENT LAW, (C) REVERSION LAW, AND (D) NATURAL GAS LAW. THE DOCUMENT ALSO WAS THOUGHT BY THE KIDNAPPERS TO BE CRITICAL OF AUTOMOTIVE POLICY, SERVICE CONTRACTS, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND THE ENTRY OF VENEZUELA INTO THE ANDEAN PACT. THE DOCUMENT IS SAID TO CONTAIN AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPORT SUBSTITUTION PROGRAM AND DECISION 24 AS IT AFFECTS FOREIGN INVESTMENT.

6. THE KIDNAPPERS' LETTER EXPLAINS THAT OWENS-ILLINOIS IS ONE OF MANY MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES THAT "ROB THE COUNTRY AND EXPLOIT THE WORKING CLASS, HAVE AT THEIR COMMAND SUFFICIENT POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC POWER TO ENABLE THEM TO

INTERVENE IN ALL THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE NATION." THE LETTER ALSO MENTIONS THAT FACT THAT OWENS-ILLINOIS HAS VARIOUS AFFILIATED COMPANIES IN VENEZUELA. A PURPORTED COMPANY PLANNING ASTRATEGY FOR 1973-78 IS CITED WHEREIN THE COMPANY WOULD ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN THE MARKET FOR SUPPLYING GLASS FOR THE HOUSING PROJECTS OF THE WORKERS BANK. THE "MAVIPLANCA" DOCUMENT PURPORTEDLY CALLS FOR A PLAN OF ACTION WHEREBY THE ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATION AND WORKERS BANK COULD BE INFLUENCED TO APPROVE THE DESIGN OF LARGER WINDOWS FOR THE HOUSING PROJECT. END UNCLASSIFIED.

7. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. COMMENT: IT IS OUR IMPRESSION THAT MOST VEN-

EZUELAN AUTHORITIES CONSIDER THE LETTER TO BE AUTHENTIC AND THE KIDNAPPING AN ESSENTIALLY POLITICAL ACT. WE GATHER, HOWEVER, THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME SORT OF EVENTUAL RANSOM DEMAND OR TRADE-OFF HAS NOT BEEN ENTIRELY DISCARDED BY THE VENEZUELAN POLICE. THE PRINCIPAL GOV INVESTIGATION OFFICER WAS STRUCK BY THE ATTACHMENT TO THE LETTER OF INTERNAL OWENS-ILLINOIS DOCUMENTS WITH THE OBVIOUS CONNOTATION OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE AFFAIR BY SOME OWENS-ILLINOIS EMPLOYEE. HE HAS REQUESTED FRANK LYNCH OF THE OWENS-ILLINOIS TOLEDO OFFICE TO OBTAIN THROUGH COMPANY SOURCES A POLYGRAPH AND THE SERVICES OF AN EXPERT FROM THE U.S. TO INTERROGATE THE COMPANY'S EMPLOYEES. WE UNDERSTAND THAT LYNCH HAS ACCEDED TO THIS REQUEST AND IS CONTACTING A PRIVATE U.S. FIRM FOR THIS SERVICE. END COMMENT
END CONFIDENTIAL.
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